With the People...

IN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES, CHRISTIAN WORKERS IN MANY LANDS...

- *LIVE* with the people
- *WORK* with the people
- *ENDURE HARDSHIP* with the people
- *WORSHIP* with the people
- *BRING CHRIST* to the people

WITH THE PEOPLE

Pam
Rural Work
Presbyterian Ch. in the U.S.A.
4201

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES are carrying the benefits of Christian life out from the institutional centers—churches, hospitals, schools—to the people in their homes and neighborhoods. Christians who participate in these services live as well as teach the Gospel among the people. They remain with the people. They work beside them in their houses and fields, their places of employment. They learn what burdens are heaviest and what fears are darkest. They make use of the best of their own training and skill to help lighten the burdens and overcome the fears.

Christian Community Services develop where poverty is extreme, where people need constructive help in every area of life. They have been exploited. They are ignorant and diseased and hungry. The Gospel can transform their lives. But to understand its meaning and experience its power, they must not only hear it. They must see it. They must see Christian love and strength and hope expressed in daily living. The Christian Gospel always involves Incarnation.

At the close of his tour of India in 1951, Dr. Hendrik Kraemer of the World Council of Churches declared: "Christians in India have been given too long to preaching the Gospel without taking into account the context in which it is preached. Preaching and teaching, the main activities of Christians in the past century, have to go hand in hand with demonstration of the fuller Christian life in the poverty-stricken areas of the country. Attention to the whole man is needed if we are to bring the life abundant to rural India." It is just this that Christian Community Services are trying to do, not only in India, but wherever the Church is found.

Sharing in the labor of the fields.

IT CAME ABOUT THIS WAY

A CHRISTIAN doctor stood over a small, terrified boy. The child's arm was swollen, hot, an angry red. The doctor had seen arms like this often and had heard the same story—an infected burn, overlooked at first, then treated with mud, ashes, leaves, whatever well-intentioned neighbors suggested. He could fill in the rest—dust, flies, filthy wrappings. It was not a new experience, but he was deeply stirred. This child lived just down the road from the hospital, and yet every treatment inspired by ignorance and superstition had been given precedence over his scientific care. What was wrong? Why was the hospital only a last resort? Had he and his staff been so busy treating the sick who came to them, that they failed to be good neighbors? He liked his work. He rejoiced over every patient who left the hospital cured. He was doing what he felt Christ would have him do—heal the sick. But might there be a more effective way of healing? If he were to go out among the people and work in their environment, he might be able to do his healing before such serious damage had been done. He might do more. Could he not prevent some of the infections, parasites, diseases by attacking them at their source? That was where work should be done—at the source. If there was no one else to do it, why shouldn't he? Instead of watching the sick come to him when driven by desperation, why could he not leave the hospital in the hands of his experienced colleagues and go out to the people? He did just that, after much thought and prayer. He was one of the pioneers in Christian Community Services.

As a young evangelist returned to the mission station from his first long tour of small settlements, he was sick at heart. He had preached and exhorted and prayed in place after place, and people had been hungry for his message. But each time they had been distressed when he said that he must move on to the next settlement. "What can we do, alone among those who do not believe? What can we do to grow and not forget the things we have heard tonight?" This appeal from a group of illiterate young men kept repeating itself in his mind. And the people—they were living in poverty and misery such as he had not thought possible. Had he the right to talk to them about Christ who loves all men alike, and then leave them in their wretchedness while he returned to the clean comfort and joy and good food of his own home? Perhaps when people were born and brought up in conditions barely human, they needed something in addition to preaching. A living witness among them, along with his verbal witness, might be necessary to bring about actual change in their lives. He and his wife together had skills and training that could be used in raising the standards of living of at least a nucleus of men and women and children. These in turn

could pass on the meaning of the better life to their own people. Was that not how most news spread through the countryside? It was worth trying. He found that his wife, too, was sensitive to the need and the call. So they moved out to the people as a family, not recklessly but after careful planning. They, too, were pioneers in Christian Community Services.

Others in different places, in different types of Christian work, have made similar decisions. Though the pattern may be slightly different in each case, common aims and the shared conviction that the Gospel of Christ is for all of life, bind them together. A few of the Christian Community Service projects which are well on their way are presented in this brochure.

Sharing the Mam New Testament with the Mam Indians.

IN LEBANON

JIBRAIL RURAL FELLOWSHIP CENTER

FOR CENTURIES Jibrail has been like the many other villages scattered over the barren, stony hills of Lebanon—squalid and neglected. But during the past few years a change has begun to take place with the advent of the Jibrail Rural Fellowship Center. The Center is being built by a group of consecrated Christians, prepared to do manual labor as well as teach, all of them Lebanese except Dr. and Mrs. Neal Alter. They have dedicated themselves to a task beyond their own strength or ability. But they have faith that God will use them and their Center to awaken the people of Jibrail and through them, the people of other villages beyond the encircling hills.

Beds on the floor also can be neat.

In an area where most fields are poorly cared for and where crops are sparse and stunted, the fields and orchards of the Center stand out green and flourishing, a demonstration of what men by their labor can draw from the arid land. The buildings of the Center are unpretentious, but gleaming white, clean and sturdy. They likewise demonstrate what hard work and care can achieve for those who live in the forlorn, untidy huts of the neighborhood. Best of all is the demonstration of the lives of the Christians themselves. By word and deed they are imparting the Gospel to their neighbors who have resigned themselves to half-crops, half-health, half-repaired houses, half-happiness, and half-living. They offer hope in place of resignation because they have Christ. From their own personal experience, they know that everyone in the community can have all that is of value in life, in full measure. Already they have stirred some of the neighboring families. Eager faces, clean clothes, scattered efforts at tidiness, and an occasional healthy orchard testify to this.

It would have been easy for the people of Jibrail to

At home weekends, Mariana cooks for her family.

continue as they and their forebears had lived, without attempting to do anything more than admire the Center from a distance. But when the Christians of the Center came into the homes and fields of the village and demonstrated better ways of working and living under familiar conditions, the Jibrail families began to regard improvement as possible and desirable.

It was the young people who first responded to the promise of enriched life. The elders feared that in striving for something better they might lose the little they had. But the young people were quick to see that the members of the Center had much which they lacked. And it was around them that the members of the Center developed their program. They did not overlook the elders, because they believed that progress can best be made by whole families in their normal environment. So there is a Rural Institute for adults, comparable to the fundamental education of the school.

The school, designed to prepare young people to be constructive members of their own village communities, has thrown wide its doors to welcome boys and girls straight from their village homes. Even those who have never had a chance to learn to read and write are invited to attend. At first they come for a few hours a day until they are ready to become part-time boarders. As boarders, the girls learn to sew and to prepare nutritious, tempting meals from the food supplies they bring from their homes.

Carpenters in training at the Fellowship Center.

The boys work on the farm where they learn how to care for animals, trees and soil. The girls learn child development, and the boys how to repair farm and home tools and buildings. They spend almost every week end at home. This gives them immediate opportunity to express what they are learning and keeps the family in step with their progress. All their new knowledge is given meaning by the lessons they learn in Bible classes.

The development of one family which is quite typical illustrates what the Rural Fellowship Center can do. Like most poorer families of Jibrail this one, consisting of two adults and six children, lived in a one-room house with a small dark lean-to for the cow and their supplies. The father is a stone-trimmer and builder, depending on casual employment in the mountain villages around Jibrail. The family's first contact with the Center was through Mariana, the fourteen-year-old daughter. When she heard that the school would accept illiterate girls, she asked to attend. Her clothes were old, torn, and soiled and at first she was diffident and untidy. After an enthusiastic teacher had patiently taught her to read Arabic, she found her place in the varied activities of the school—the classes, the work, and the fun. She caught the vision of life as it might be. Through the summer months that followed her first year, she and her mother worked hard to provide the wheat, olives, lentils, and oil required of boarders. That fall she was one of the students who first occupied the new "cottage" unit. She developed physically; she blossomed mentally and spiritually. Bright, attractive, and neat, a new Mariana completed the special three-year course for village girls. As she received her school diploma and the Arabic Bible which she could now read with understanding, she promised to do her best to carry out in her own home the principles

of better home life that she had learned at school. Her family has recently arranged for her marriage, and the bridegroom is being congratulated on finding a wife who will make him a real home.

Soon after Mariana entered the girls' school, her brother Abdullah, sixteen and illiterate, presented himself at the boys' school. He had followed in his father's trade, so was prepared to help in all the building projects of the Fellowship Center. He developed into a conscientious, reliable worker, and has become one of the most important links between the Center and the village community to which he belongs. Through his numerous relatives, he has a natural connection with more than one-third of the village. When they saw how Abdullah, one of their own young men, had advanced in every phase of his life, they became interested in the Fellowship Center. One evening sixty men and teen-age boys appeared, announcing that they were ready to cooperate with any suggestions the people at the Center might have which would improve their condition. As a result, they have formed a cooperative society for the village of Jibrail, they have encouraged the work of the community nurse, and they take an active part in the program of the Center.

The family now has a new, clean house. Abdullah bought the materials with money he himself earned, he trimmed every stone with his own hands, and he and his father and brothers built the walls. Mariana and her sisters have been responsible for attractive curtains, a pleasant living room, and a kitchen that is convenient and neat, a contrast to the cluttered outdoor kitchen of their old home. They have planted flowers and vegetables, bordered by straight paths. They had never had the initiative to clean up the unsightly courtyard of their old house. The Rural Fellowship Center at Jibrail is giving young people like these, and their families, an opportunity to develop the best that is in them and to share that best with their community. It makes them better stewards, it creates in them a new respect for themselves and for others, and it gives them new hope and a new faith in God as a loving Father.

Abdullah and his brother begin their new home.

IN INDIA

INDIA VILLAGE SERVICE

THE MEN and women who join India Village Service dedicate themselves to the living of their faith among village people. They cut themselves off from the congenial fellowship, the greater sense of security and the amenities of town life, to live in homes that will bring them near to village people and will attract village people to them. At present there are eight such colleagues—young Christian Indians, four men and four women. All but one are college graduates who would now be teaching in college or high

At first this village volunteer kept just one lesson ahead of the children she taught outside her door. Now she is given the respect of a teacher.

An I.V.S. colleague compares the new with the old.

school if they had not responded to the call to Christian service in the villages. Dr. and Mrs. William Wiser are with them, encouraging high standards of work and mental and spiritual growth in adverse circumstances, and drawing on their own experiences in village life to increase understanding.

Indian Village Service, like most Christian Community Services, is the fulfillment of a long-standing desire on the part of a few Christians to express their love of Christ by helping men and women to rise from the level of bare existence to become what God means them to be. Those who initiated the work knew that if they were really to effect the desired changes in life in the villages, they must have the cooperation of a number of trained men and women. These were found — the present colleagues. As trained teachers they are able to put the information which specialists in government and mission institutions have to offer into terms easily understood by villagers. Or they bring an expert into the village to help in a project in his particular field. They have found demonstration to be the most effective method of teaching illiterate people. And they have learned to demonstrate in all sorts of situations, in fields, homes or lanes, for persons of all ages, without any of the facilities of classroom or laboratory. They experiment and study in order to help villagers solve new problems or meet new needs which develop as they progress. The work of the colleagues is comparable to that of county agents and home demonstrators in America, but it includes much more, partly because there are no other agencies in the area to share the responsibility, and partly because the farmers and homemakers of North India start with the bare minimum. Theirs is a service for the whole community and for every part of the life of any individual within the community. It is also frankly Christian.

Before work was begun, the principles to be upheld and general goals to be sought were agreed upon after much prayer and thought. Now these principles are being tested, and revised or reaffirmed by the colleagues. One is that a colleague should help people to help themselves. It would be easy for Harry Prased to go a day's journey to get seed potatoes of superior quality, but he waits until the farmers themselves decide to go. When this results in a better crop, they are prepared to venture elsewhere for other improved seeds. This one break from fear of encountering the unfamiliar is a step toward release from other fears. It is a slow process, but more lasting than giving help, as experience has proven again and again. Every one of the colleagues could open a school and do full time teaching in any of the villages. Instead, they encourage and train volunteers who teach on their own doorsteps. This results in a number of small classes at hours possible for teacher and pupils, with lessons of particular interest to them. The volunteers are gaining new dignity and self-respect. The only books or slates or pencils used are those which the pupils themselves can provide. A resourceful teacher may use the dust or clay beside the door in lieu of slates, or

The public health nurse with an uptilted cot for a screen, tells a flannelgraph Bible story.

The colleague does his share.

The newly literate villager discusses farm magazines with a colleague.

pupils make their own, usually of wood. One young woman solved her slate problem by using a wooden sandal. Because books are rare and not adapted to village interests, the colleagues have cooperated with the volunteer teachers in preparing a series of cheap, inspirational booklets. Also they are encouraging villagers to pool money to subscribe for one of the few magazines prepared for village men and women. The excitement when these magazines arrive and the thoroughness with which they are read by the literates to the illiterates, are evidence of the desire to learn. Through them knowledge will increase, and ignorance and superstition decrease, long after the colleague has gone.

The India Village Service colleague first gets acquainted, then makes his place in the community by cooperating in village activities. When his neighbors are sure of his friendship, they welcome him in their family or group discussions, where he discovers what they themselves consider most needed for progress. And he begins his actual work by attacking this need which they feel keenly, rather than by presenting a program to meet the needs apparent to him. If he can help them meet their own felt need—and he does regardless of time or effort—he wins their confidence and can then encourage them to attempt some of the more constructive things he has in mind.

Still another principle is that if a colleague's idea for improving life in the village is adopted, he must not be a bystander. He must roll up his sleeves and do his share.

The colleagues, like most educated persons, were not accustomed to manual labor. But now any one of them will enter into whatever community job is being done, working cheerfully, soaked with perspiration, tired and hungry like the men around him. When the work is finished and he sits with these same men, there is the fellowship of a team. They feel free to ask friendly, personal questions, and listen with interest to what he has to say. He is their beloved Christian brother. What has been said of the men is true of the women colleagues as well. Their opportunities to bear testimony to their faith in work and word are even greater, because they are inside the homes where both curiosity and prejudice against new ideas are strongest. An observer said of one of the colleagues, Sheila Rawson, who lives and works alone, "Bahinji (sister) is doing more than an eighteen-hour-a-day teaching job. Through her the Word dwells among the people of her village."

Prayer together before the day's work.

Village women learn to knit from homespun wool.

Where India Village Service functions, the villagers believe that there is a Savior who cares for them, poor and unlovely as they are. They believe, because they know the sincerity of the young men and women who have told them that this is so. These young people have never condescended to giving charity. By their lives and selfless service they have shown what they mean by the love of Christ. They have become part of the village community, have shared in labor, in sorrow and in rejoicing. They have really cared.

IN GUATEMALA

THE MAM EVANGELISTIC CENTER

WHEN Dorothy and Dudley Peck arrived at their mission station far back in the mountains of Guatemala in 1922, they discovered that their neighbors near and far were Mam Indians, many thousands of them, whose heritage of highly developed culture and skill had been reduced to one of ignorance and all that goes with it. What could two young missionaries do to help this defeated people regain their rightful place among the children of God? The immediate answer was the Bible. There were no Mam Bibles, because there was no written Mam language. So first the language had to be reduced to writing and then the Bible translated into it, beginning with the New Testament.

As the Pecks progressed with the translation, they realized that to become familiar with the expressions and idioms of the people, they must go to the people. They left the mission station and went from section to section of the mountains. Wherever they went they lived with the people, in Mam Indian homes under Indian conditions. They were no longer aliens. They learned to think as Indians think. They identified themselves with Indians.

It was this experience that made them aware of a problem as difficult as that of translation. They were translating the Bible into the Mam tongue for the benefit of the Mam people. But how were they to bring the Bible, when translated, into the daily living of Mam Christians? Until the Christians showed by their lives that they were followers of Christ, how could they hope to draw others to Him? Pagan leaders were still powerful, controlling every phase of the life of every family and individual. They prescribed detailed rites for each daily activity and made their services seem indispensable in every crisis or emergency. To withstand them, the small groups of Christians must be spiritually strong. But apathy, ignorance and disease were making them weak. Whoever would help them must understand all this and be prepared to start from the ground up. Indians themselves must be the answer—Indians who had experienced life in a Mam village and had also experienced life in a Christian environment. They must overcome their own ignorance and disease in order to help others do likewise. They must be able to read the Bible and teach it to others. Above all, they must demonstrate its power in their ordinary daily living, in their relationships, in the care of their bodies, their homes, and their land.

The Pecks met this problem by setting up the Mam Evangelistic Center, where they can prepare one or two members of each village for this Christian community service. It may take years to reach the many Mam settlements in this way. But it is going deeper into people's lives

Village girls learn new skills.

At the Institute learners begin at once to teach others.

They have a share in Extension Service.

Paying Institute nurse for medicine.

In their favor are their more productive farms, their neater homes, and their healthier children. Even more impressive is their ability to read and write, a rare skill in mountain villages. This gives them a position of respect. Their readiness to teach others is their chief commendation to their younger friends. One of the mature ex-students, Inez Diaz, was chosen by the village principals, the four old men, to become chief of the local police, a voluntary service regarded as an honor. In the evenings after making the rounds, he gathers the other officials together in the small courthouse, and by candlelight teaches them to read in Mam. He is proving a worthy steward, and where he lives the Christian group is strong. His is the continuing Christian influence which is so vital in a new, isolated Christian community, struggling to grow in a hostile environment.

Back home, seed selection commands new respect.

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BETTER LIFE THROUGH BETTER HEALTH

AN increasing number of Christian hospitals around the world are extending their work by setting up roadside clinics or by moving out to more distant places with mobile clinics. By such means they are reaching people who are too far away to travel to the hospital or who stay away from fear of the unknown. A few Christian doctors have gone still further. They have left hospital service in order to live and work in the villages with people who have not known that there is any relation between polluted drinking water and disease, polluted soil and intestinal parasites, flies and a host of diseases, mosquitoes and malaria, dirty bodies and itch. Because they have not known, they have attributed suffering to the visitation of evil powers. To convince them of the truth and to persuade them to act on it when once they know, is a complicated task, crowded with obstacles and delays. But the few who have undertaken it, know that it is vital and worthwhile.

One of these few is Gladys Rutherford. Those who worked with Dr. Rutherford were proud of her success as a physician. Her mission hospital was regarded as the best in that part of India. But she herself was disheartened. She had spent twenty-four years giving relief from pain to the crowds of women and children who came to her. Yet whenever she visited her poorer ex-patients in their homes, she was appalled at the conditions under which they were trying to recuperate. She was patching people up, only to send them back to surroundings that would doubtless bring them back to her worse than before.

While she was pondering her problem the idea of Christian community services was presented to her. She recognized in this a real opportunity to use her medical skill constructively. She saw a definite place for doctors in a program intended to transform all of life so that men might share in the radiance of Christian living. As a doctor she could help families so to change their surroundings that cleanliness would replace filth and flies, and buoyant health would replace unnecessary suffering and disease. She could help people to save themselves from the treadmill of pain to which they were now bound.

Since her training was inadequate for this new service she took a course in public health in England and returned to India armed with techniques for preventing sickness. She joined an interdenominational group engaged in Christian Community Service with her headquarters in a Presbyterian mission hospital. The next step was the adapting of her training to Indian village conditions. Under the guidance of her Indian colleagues, she learned to think in terms of the cleaning of clogged open drains and the digging of trench latrines in place of the municipal sewage

Some hospitals set up roadside clinics.

system which she had studied in Birmingham. And from the chemical treatment of a city's water supply, she switched to the protection of open wells and ponds from pollution. She struggled for months until simple remedies and a strong insecticide could be bought in small quantities at the lowest price in the one-room store of each village, where spices and oil are always available. She taught local potters to make clay containers, like salt shakers, to be used in sprinkling the insecticide on infested surfaces. People in her area can now get what they need without depending on her or any other outsider. They are learning to buy medicines, rather than beg for them or do without.

When a Muslim farmer approached Dr. Rutherford for medicine to rid him of the tormenting lice in his beard, she advised him to buy a shaker full of the insecticide. He finally did and the results were dramatic. The lice came spilling out. Curious onlookers were convinced. Farmers went home to try the process on the ticks that were harming their cows and buffaloes. To a farmer his one or two animals are as important as the members of his family. A few experiments, almost as spectacular as the beard episode, established the reputation of the insecticide in that village. The next step was trying it out in grain storerooms, and farmers now depend on it to protect their seed grain from the depravations of insects.

In spite of Dr. Rutherford's efforts to adapt her health lessons to village interests and understanding, the response

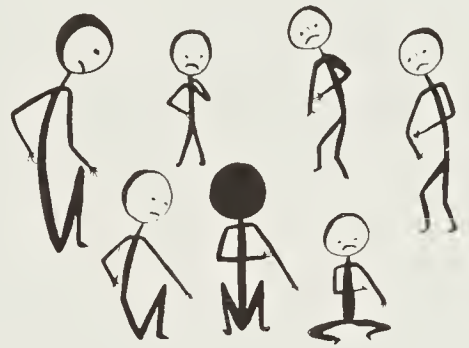
continued to be apathetic. Lectures were boring. Pictures helped but were difficult to draw, and their use was localized because of distinctive dress. Then she discovered the Jets. These line drawings of "stick men" were simple to do, they could tell a story graphically, and they were universal. She tested them in a series on the prevention of malaria. They were greeted with such enthusiasm that she had them printed on flash cards. Soon there followed a series on itch and another on tuberculosis. These were also printed and still more asked for. Now all over India, in village and city homes, in schools or by the roadside, teachers and doctors, nurses and welfare workers are using the Jets to show the way to health. Village men and women, and children, too, understand them well enough to use them in passing on the word to others.

Further experience and discoveries have led to new techniques. Now Dr. Rutherford travels all over India, demonstrating methods and giving encouragement to medical personnel, to pastors, and to laymen and women. Church conferences and institutes call on her. Her function has become that of a technician, advising Christian individuals and groups who have the desire to make life better but who lack knowledge in her particular field. She is doing more than she once dreamed possible in defeating disease. Now she is attacking disease, and stimulating others to attack it, at its source. People who accepted ill-health as their fate now know that health and joy in life are attainable. This is what Gladys Rutherford, like other Christian doctors, believes Christ would have her bring about.

Part of the Jet Series on Itch.

ITCH No. 1

ITCH No. 2



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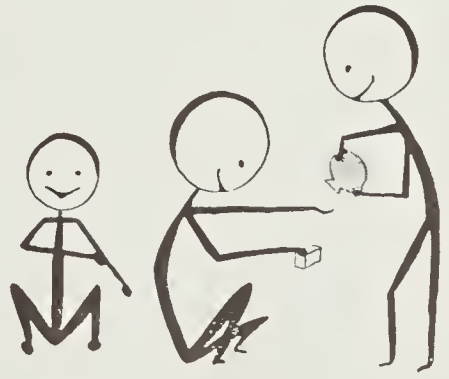


ON FARMS

IN AFRICA, THAILAND, AND MEXICO

Most of the new churches in the world today are in rural areas. The farmers in these areas should be able to produce plenty for themselves and their children, and provide for others in the cities as well. Instead, their production is so meager that they are constantly haunted by the dread of hunger. Little wonder then that Christian work in each such area normally includes a farm-centered project, for better provision of food. Here are three such projects.

The herd at Metet.

A new arrival.

Too poor to buy soap, they make their own.

METET

Surrounding Metet, in the French Cameroun, is the hostile forest which again and again has defeated the attempts of men to gain a foothold. Only by constant vigilance and steady, hard work with axe, knife, and hoe could the Africans hope to make a bare livelihood. The tse tse fly killed off their cattle. This left the children without milk, and the farmers without draft animals. All field work had to be done with hand tools, which restricted the amount of land they could cultivate. And the small clearings that they did cultivate were wearing out. Fertility was further reduced by torrential rains that repeatedly carried off the surface. The African farmers had neither the knowledge nor the initiative to cope with these obstacles. They were accepted as further evidence of the terrible power of nature and the futility of men.

A mission station was established at Metet and did much for the Africans there. The missionaries and African co-workers built a church from which evangelists went out to preach the Gospel. This brought new hope. There was a school for the children at Metet and other schools in the settlements scattered through the forest, and much needed medical work was introduced. But one drawback remained. There was not enough food. And as a result people were listless. Often they failed to respond wholeheartedly, and missed opportunities to learn. To meet this, as well as other needs, Rene Ryter, a young man with agricultural training was sent to Metet. With his help the Africans have achieved what they had thought impossible. They are no longer dominated by the forest. They are clearing new ground and restoring the soil of the old fields. This, with better farming methods and seed selection, has increased their food supply considerably. They have built a granary where rats and weevils and moles can no longer steal the corn which they themselves have raised with such effort. They have discovered that animals, both for work and for food, can be raised—if properly fed and cared for and inoculated. Life becomes more worthwhile when they and their families are better nourished. With this comes a desire to be cleaner, to have neater homes, to make the necessary effort to be free from debilitating disease. They have become aware of their own ability and strength, a wonderful experience for men resigned to misery and want. Rene Ryter has had a share, with his co-workers, in helping the people of Metet to gain new dignity, to move out from the fears that harassed them, into new strength. He has expressed his own purpose and that of his Christian colleagues: "We shall seek to become identified more clearly with the people, to learn from them and work with them in making better use of the talents and resources God has provided. We believe that Africa can become a great radiant continent and not the 'dark Continent' we have pictured so hopelessly in the past."

THESE ARE WELL ON THEIR WAY

CHIANGRAI RURAL PROJECT

In Thailand a number of young Christians have set up their own Christian Community Service, with Forrest Travaille, a missionary with agricultural training, as co-worker. These sixty young Thais are clearing twelve hundred acres of dense jungle in the Chiangrai valley and are cultivating the land as a cooperative farm. They find that by cooperation they can provide adequate food and shelter for their families, without depending on others. At the same time, they believe that by practicing what the Gospel means to them in their relationships within the cooperative community and in their stewardship of the land, they can witness for Christ as individuals and as a group in a way which their Thai neighbors can understand. Their children, too, are growing and learning in a Christian environment.

They all cooperate in the work of the farm. Each family receives its share of the food produced or the money received from the sale of surplus rice. Most of them are farmers. A few have learned to drive and repair the two tractors purchased cooperatively by the group, and a few others are school teachers.

The life of the community centers around the church and the school. While they work toward a beautiful church building, they worship in a temporary structure of bamboo.

To build a road, they first clear the forest.

A few have learned to drive and repair the tractors.

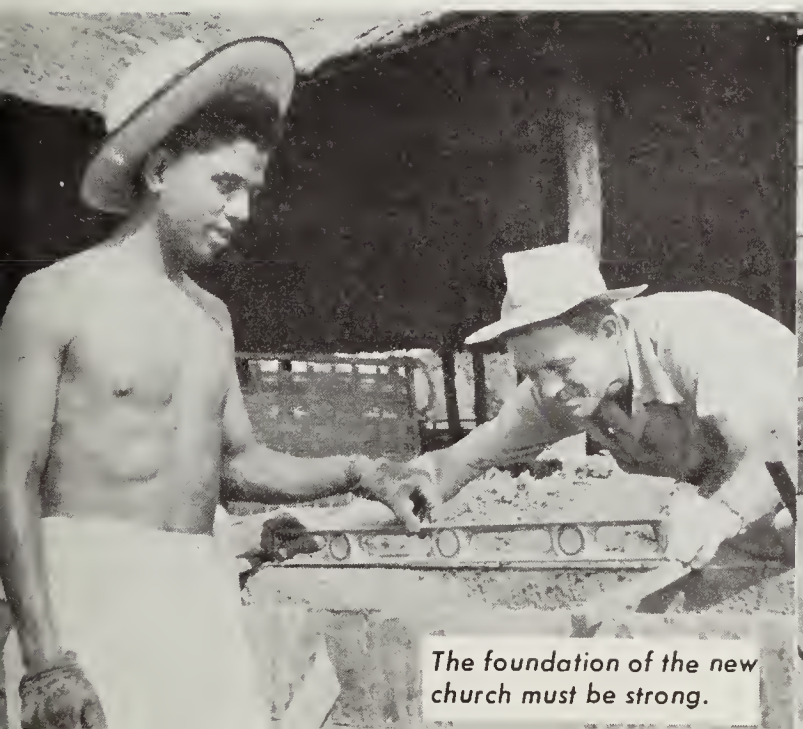
Other Christians, seeing the success of the Chiangrai co-operative project, have moved into the valley to be near by, to learn what they can and to share in the benefits. Most of them worship with the cooperative community so that the Chiangrai communion is now the largest in the Presbytery. A member of the Project who graduated from high school and attended three seminary institutes, serves as pastor. One hundred and twenty children from homes in the Project attend the school, and Christian neighbors send their children because of the Christian teaching they receive. This makes the school an unusually large one for rural Thailand.

Last year the Chiangrai Project acted as host to an International Work Camp. Forty-two students from six different countries came to work for three weeks. Two young men of the Project were appointed by their Council to participate as regular members of the Work Camp. There were wide differences in backgrounds between these two with their scant schooling and limited experience and the other campers, all college students. But common tasks and the development of common interests did much to iron these out. The enterprises undertaken by the campers were the beginning of a cement granary and the cement floor of the new church. For a number of them, work with their hands was a new experience and for the farm families, students engaged in manual labor was an amazing sight. Language which might have proved a barrier succumbed to eloquent gestures and smiles. The campers were accepted wholeheartedly by the community, especially when one of them, a medical student, assisted by the camp nurse, delivered a baby in one of the homes of the Project under very difficult circumstances. Guided by men of experience and wisdom, the work camp proved a fruitful venture, enriching

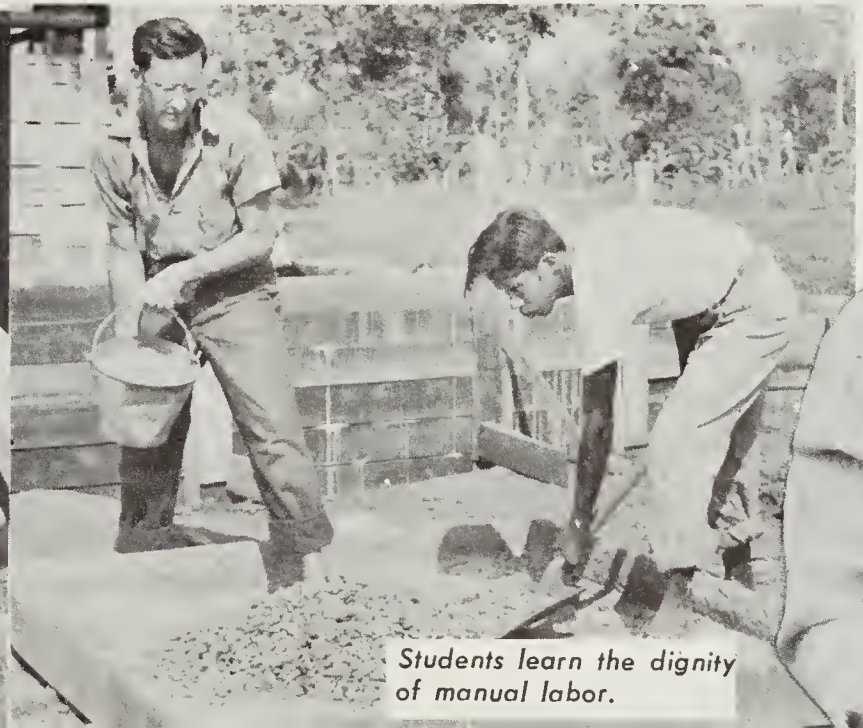
Tool shed at the Chiangrai Project.

the life of each camper and broadening the horizons of each host and hostess.

The members of the Chiangrai Rural Project live simply on what they themselves raise, much as their neighbors do but with a difference. By hard work and by cooperating with like-minded men and women, they have secured an adequate living for their families, well above the subsistence level of most people of their country. They have freed themselves from the threat of starvation and of the professional money-lender. They have a rich group life and can speak with authority of Christian brotherhood and of a Father who gives them strength to move forward. These sixty men working separately could not have cleared the jungle of its huge trees and tangled undergrowth. Nor could they produce in sixty single small units the quantity of food they are now able to provide. They agree that what they are accomplishing is largely due to their willingness to cooperate and to the technical skill offered them by a man who lives and works as one of them although a foreigner. It is projects such as this that enable world Christianity to refute the claim of Communism that it has the only solution to the problem of food production in Asia.



The foundation of the new church must be strong.



Students learn the dignity of manual labor.

Medical student at work camp officiates at birth of Chiangrai baby.

OAXACA

Lester Zook is a missionary farmer without a farm. However, there are thousands of small farm plots all around him in the State of Oaxaca in Mexico whose owners are in dire need of his skill. To help them, he has become a Christian County Agent. Because he is only one, and the people who seek his help are many, he is limiting his services to Evangelical Christians. It seems wrong to him that his own people should remain in such an intolerable state. Moreover, he counts on them as Christians to share with their neighbors any advantages they receive.

Mr. Zook began by distributing baby chicks to rural pastors. The pastors welcomed the addition to their meager incomes provided by the chicks and gave ten per cent of the proceeds from their sale to the work of the church. The pastors passed on the idea to Christians in their fields so effectively that requests for chicks now come from all over Oaxaca State and seven other states as well. The first chicks came from Pennsylvania State College. Later the college contributed two incubators which are in constant use, either at the Bible School which is the Zooks' headquarters, or out in a village Christian home where the farmer has learned how to use and care for an incubator. Outbreaks of disease, frequent in Oaxaca, call Mr. Zook to various parts of the state to inoculate fowls. Each such trip brings him into closer contact with the rural people.

With the chicks well on their way to providing a little

Bored hole latrine is important in disease prevention.

more food and additional income, Mr. Zook began work on improved seed. He distributes samples of selected seeds of familiar grains, such as corn and sorghum, and common vegetables—cabbage, beans, squash, cucumbers—to rural pastors during their annual conference. When they try the seed on their own tiny plots and see the results in increased food supply, they are convinced and their neighbors are impressed. Now they all make an effort to secure the selected seed.

The absence of irrigation, resulting in loss of needed crops, gave Mr. Zook deep concern. He persuaded a small group of Evangelical Christians in one village to dig a well for which he provided funds and the work of his own hands. He also helped dig the ditches from the well to the fields. When the dry season came and the ground was dry and hard, the Christians faithfully irrigated their fields. They were rewarded, for not only were their stalks of grain beautifully green and flourishing, but when crops were harvested, the irrigated fields produced three times as much corn as fields across the road where the same kind of seed grew in the same kind of soil with the same kind of care, without irrigation. This experience led them a step further. If the small amount of water they could draw by hand had such results, what would happen if they had one of the motor pumps which Mr. Zook had shown them? After many long discussions and with some trepidation, a number of farmers cooperated in the purchase and installing of a motor pump, to the ultimate benefit of many more

Baby chicks for rural pastors.

A roadside consultation.

fields, and families. Along with their active interest in the chicks and in irrigation and selected seed, the Evangelical Christian farmers are beginning to work on tree planting, strip farming and terracing to save the top soil of their farms from being carried away by storms and wind. They are learning to protect their precious fruit and grain and vegetables from the plant pests so common in Mexico. At the same time they are discovering why they must destroy the parasites that are draining their own vitality and that of their families, particularly those that lie in wait, in polluted soil. As a result some have improved their village drains, and a few are digging bored hole latrines.

This new irrigation well boasts a motor pump.

Wherever he goes, Lester Zook carries films showing what farmers in other places are doing to increase production under conditions like those of Oaxaca. He also has films of the life of Christ. He shows the pictures at the end of the day's work which he has shared with them. Where farmers know nothing of good farming, they are content with poor crops, poor animals, poor homes and families. And where they depend on short messages from the Gospel brought to them occasionally by a preacher who must go on to visit other villages, they often lose the vision. Mr. Zook, with his films, provides the incentive to work harder and the desire to become better followers of Christ. Answering questions about the films, and informal talks with farmers as a farmer, are his means of expressing his faith. As he helps the Evangelical Christians of Oaxaca meet the problems which harass them and which keep them from living at their best, he is constantly applying what he teaches and what his American and Mexican colleagues are teaching about the Gospel.

AND IN CONCLUSION

If, as Christians today, we mean business in building a better world, in establishing freedom, in combating those forces which would enslave men, in overcoming poverty, in conquering disease, in eradicating illiteracy, in overcoming superstition, in liberating from paganism, in destroying evil, in opening minds, hearts, and souls to the truth that makes men free, in extending the Kingdom of God, in winning men to Jesus Christ—then let us promote and enlarge and deepen Christian Community Services!

A member of the Chiangrai Work Camp conducts a church service.

THIS BROCHURE is one feature of the emphasis on Christian Community Services on the part of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in its overseas program.

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